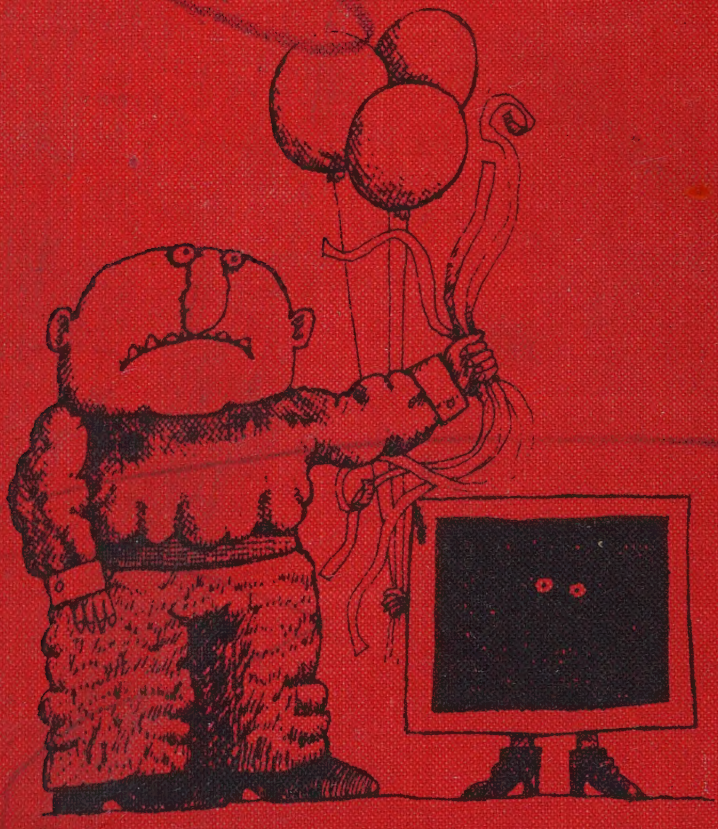

the MONSTERS' BALL

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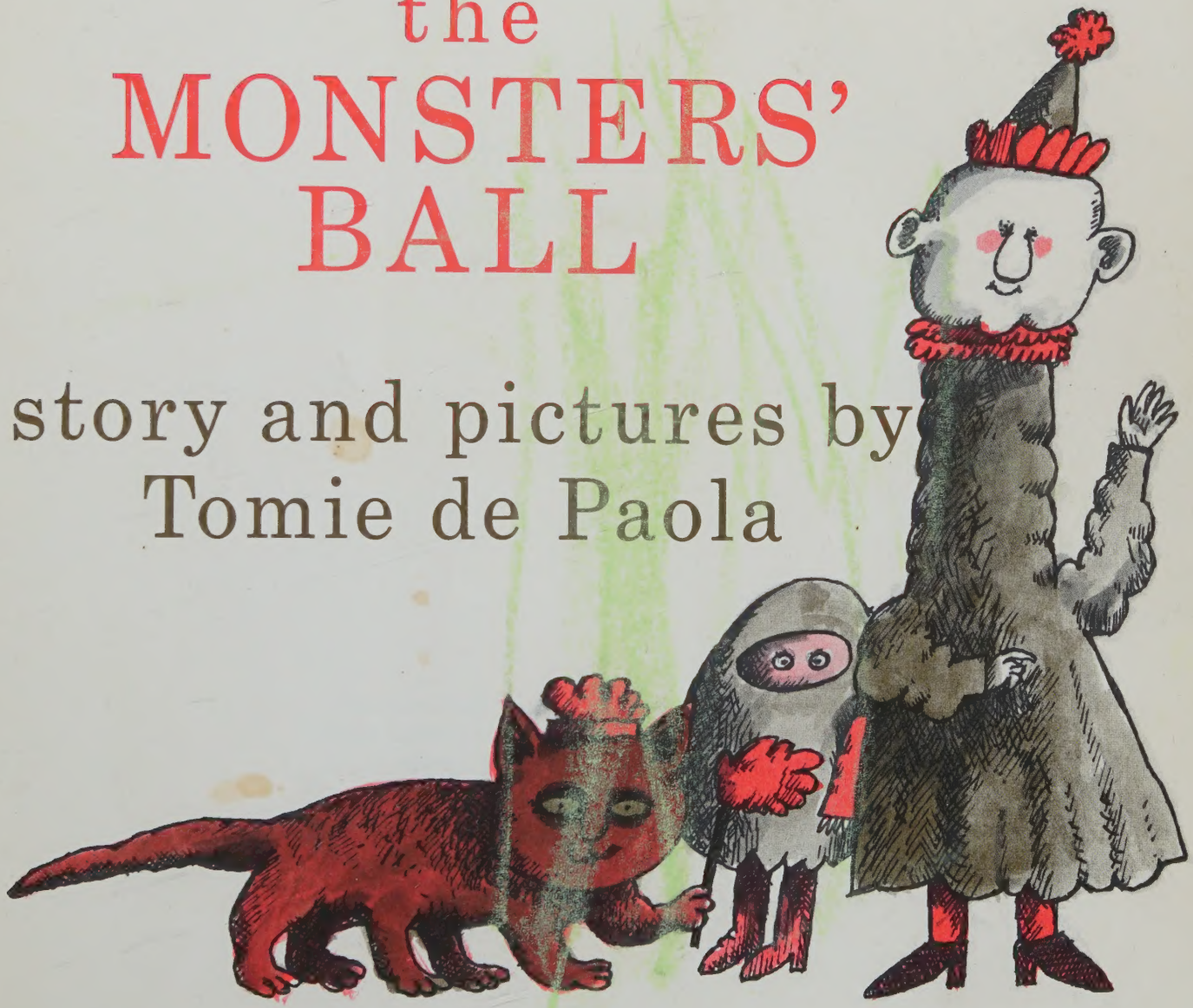
story and pictures by
Tomie de Paola



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For Thomas Christopher
and all the children who
asked for a monster book

The monster was looking for something to do, but nothing was happening. So, the monster walked along, and soon he came to another monster who was looking for something to happen, too!
"Grrr," said the first monster.

"Howl," said the second monster. "I'm looking for something to do.
Is anything happening?"
"Naw," said the first monster, "Nothing is happening. It's a great drag."
And, feeling sorry for themselves, both monsters sat down.

While they were sitting a third monster came by and said "Screech."
"Grrr," said the first monster.
"Howl," said the second monster.
"Have you guys seen any action?" asked the third monster.
The first two monsters told the third monster that things were pretty quiet, so he sat down, too.
In a little while there were a great many monsters just sitting around. They were all looking for something to do, but nothing was happening.
"I can't scare children any more. They just laugh at me," said the fifth monster, who was a Bogeyman.
"That's nothing," said the eighth monster, who was a Banshee.
"When I scream, everyone thinks it's a fire engine."

"Well," said the Headless Horseman monster, who was the ninth,
"I try to chase people, but their cars go too fast for my poor old horse."
"I'm going to retire," said the sixth monster. "There's just nothing to do."
"Well," said the twelfth monster. "Let's do SOMETHING!"
"What?" said all the other monsters.
"Let's have a BALL!" shouted the twelfth monster.

"What a great idea!" said all the other monsters.
"How do you have a ball?" asked the Backward Monster.
"First, you have to have a bunch of committees," said the tenth monster.
So all the monsters made a list of committees. Then each of them chose a committee to join. The committees were supposed to decide everything. This was not easy, because everyone had different ideas.

First there was the Date Committee. They had to decide when the ball would be held. The Banshee wanted May 1, but the Cat Monster wanted March 9.

Then the monster that was all head and legs said, "No! September 15."

"No, no!" screamed the Banshee. "I've changed my mind. April 1!"

"All right, all right," said the other monsters. "April 1, just stop screaming!"

The Ticket Committee had to decide how much the tickets would cost.
One monster suggested a dollar.
The Giant Monster thought the tickets should cost more.
"How much more?" said the first monster.
"Two-fifty," said the Giant Monster.
"That's too much," said the monster in the eggshell.
"How about fifty cents?"

Then there was the Hall Committee. They had to decide where the ball would be held. That was not easy, either. All sorts of places were mentioned, from City Hall to the moon. A Lady Monster even wanted the ball to be at *her* house.

The Music Committee had to choose a band. One monster wanted a rock band, another wanted something more old-fashioned.
"What about the Freaky Five?" said the monster who was a fish with a bird's tail.

Then there was the Publicity Committee. They were supposed to make a poster to advertise the ball. They couldn't decide how big it should be. Some of them wanted a red poster. Others thought green or yellow would look best.

The Refreshment Committee had to decide what food and drinks to serve. The Hairy Monster wanted peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. The Baby Monster wanted milk and cookies and the Harpy Monster wanted caviar and champagne.

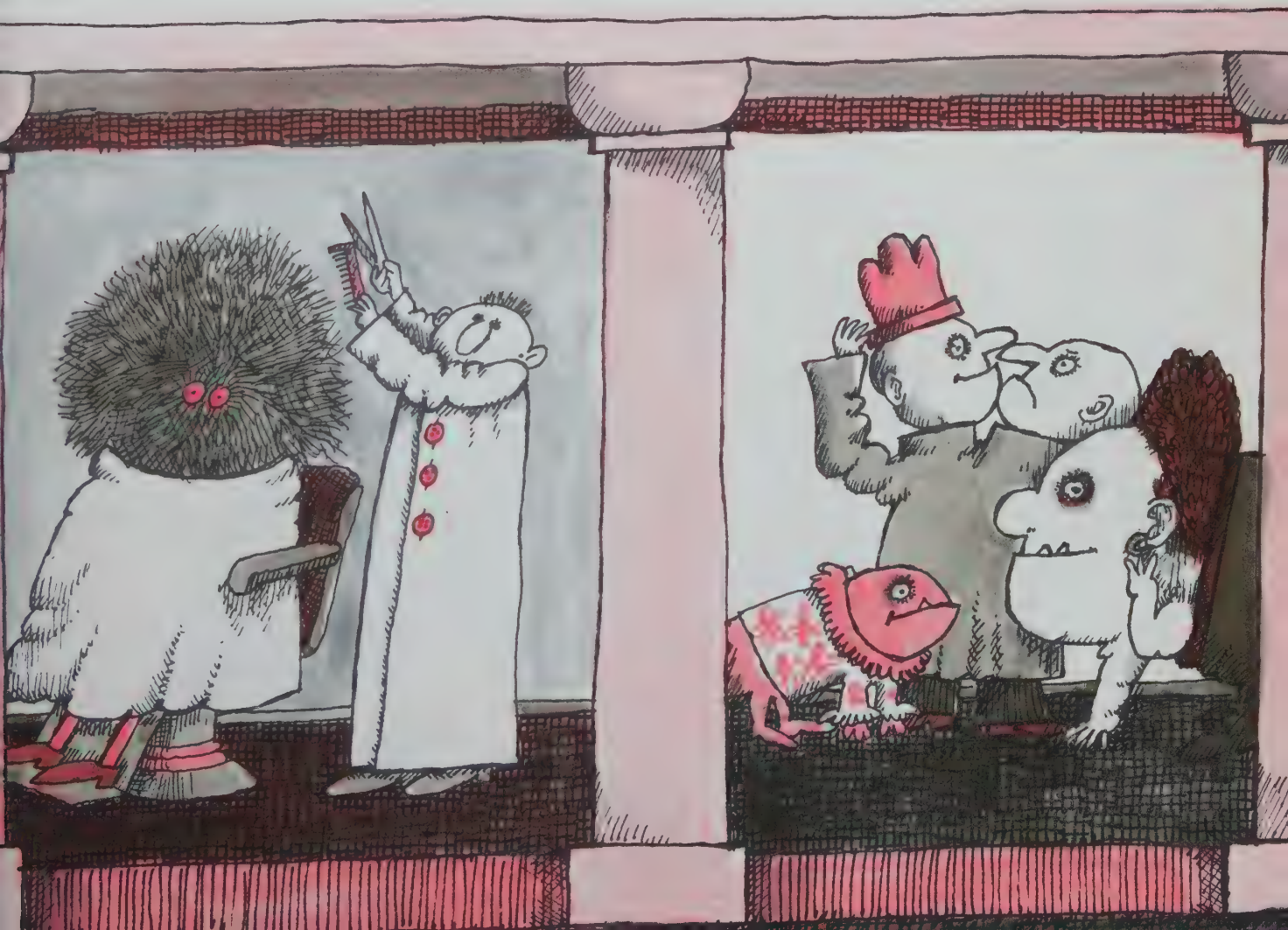
The Decoration Committee could not decide whether to use crepe-paper streamers, balloons, or potted palms, so they decided to use all three.

And finally there was a chairman. She was a lady monster, so they called her Madame Chairman. She kept track of all the committees. She had meetings and called all the committee members up on the telephone. If she didn't like something she changed it. She was very busy and important.

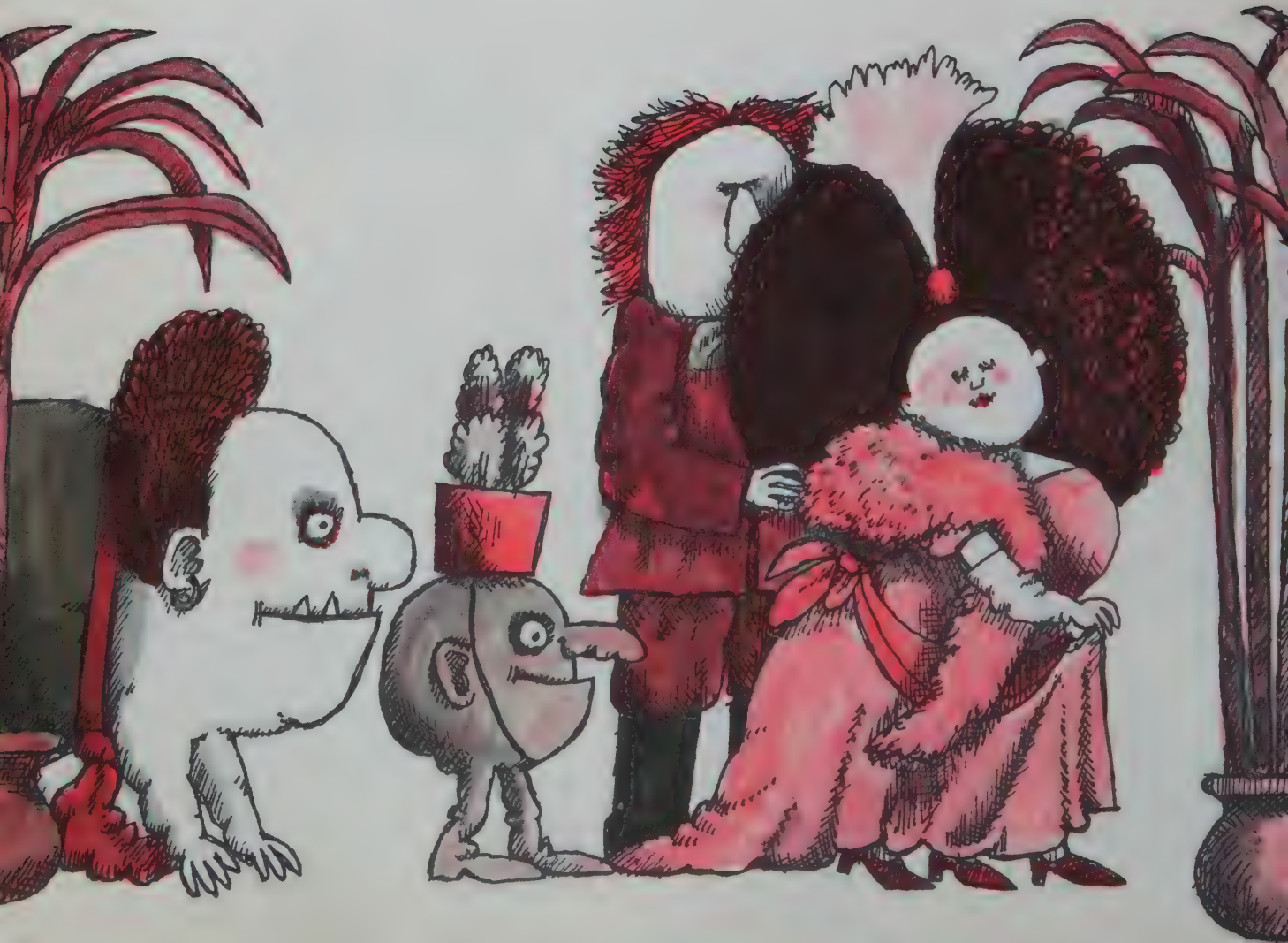
The monster committees worked very hard.
The poster was beautiful and lots of tickets were sold.
The monster with two heads had to buy two tickets.

All the monsters were very excited.
They spent days making themselves as pretty and as handsome as possible.
The lady monsters bought new dresses and fans and fancy slippers
and false eyelashes.

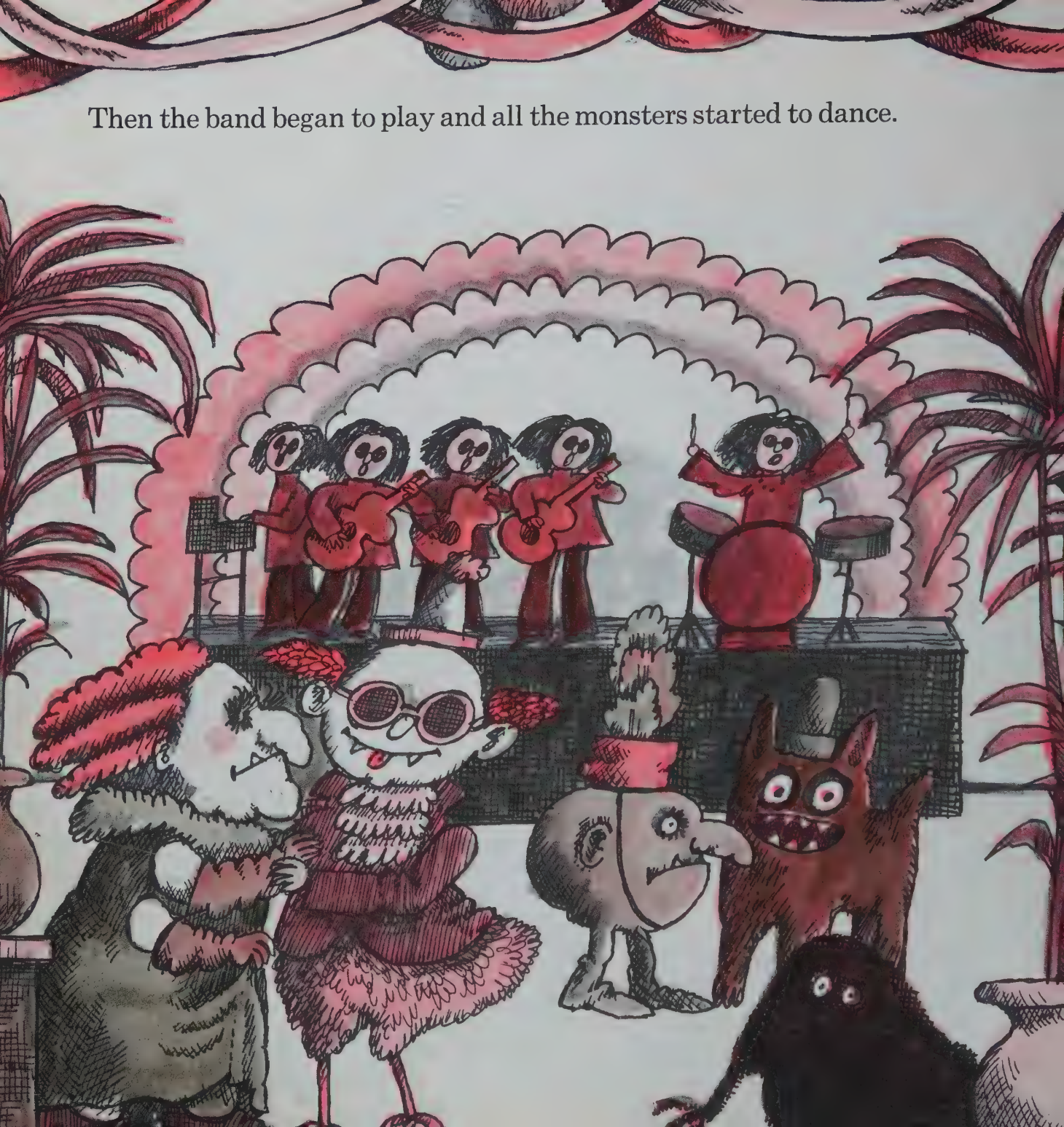
The monster beauty parlors were jammed, and so were the barber shops. The gentlemen monsters bought ruffled shirts, and rings for their claws and paws. One daring gentleman said that he planned to wear a gold earring.



Finally the night of the ball arrived and all the monsters came.
The hall looked wonderful. The refreshments were delicious.



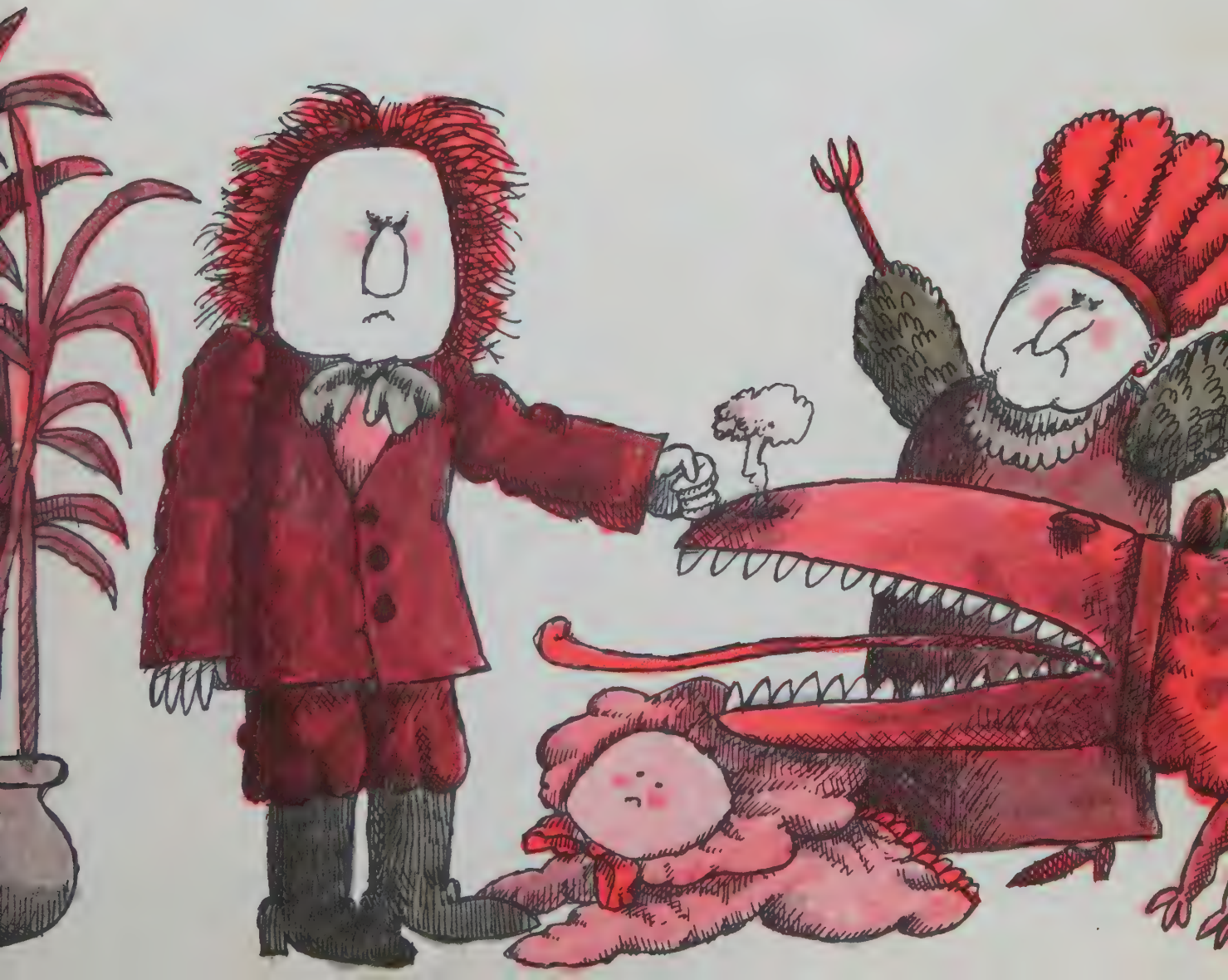
Then the band began to play and all the monsters started to dance.



This really was a happening!

Then someone stepped on the big toe of a lady monster's third foot and she screamed.

Her boy friend monster ran over and poked the monster who had stepped on his girl friend monster's foot in the nose and a big fight started!



The ball turned into a BRAWL.

When the brawl was over so was the ball. The hall was a mess, and lots of monsters had black eyes. Still, no one complained.

After all, a BRAWL is a happening, too, and when all is said and done, they were MONSTERS!

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